



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
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REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM HAMZY
SEVENTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT

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DEPUTY REPUBLICAN LEADER

MEMBER
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
REGULATIONS REVIEW COMMITTEE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING
EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

To: Member of the Labor and Public Employees Committee

From: Representative William A. Hamzy, 78th District

Re: House Bill 5153- An Act Concerning Unemployment Benefits for Certain Military Spouses

Date: February 20, 2007

Dear Senator Prague, Representative Ryan, and the members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

When an individual leaves his or her job voluntarily, they are, in most cases, disqualified for Unemployment Benefits. However, there is an exception for individuals who leave their positions for a "good cause." Leaving an occupation because a spouse in the military is transferred should be considered a "good cause." Our soldiers are not allowed to reject transfers as civilians are, nor are they allowed to leave their job to avoid transfer. Because of their sacrifice for our nation, their families should not suffer.

In the State of Connecticut, there are three-thousand-five-hundred-eighty-five military spouses in the labor force. Approximately less than two percent of those people, about forty-three individuals, would be eligible for the benefits requested in this bill. The maximum weekly aid which each individual would be allowed to receive would be no more than an estimated two-hundred and fifty-three dollars. This means that the maximum amount of aid that this bill would allocate would be approximately thirty-five hundred dollars weekly and about one-hundred-fifty thousand dollars a year.

Connecticut would not be the first state to allow such benefits to its soldier's spouses. California, Texas, Florida, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, New York, Washington,

North Carolina, and New Mexico are among states with large military presences that allow compensation to military spouses.

The brave men and women who serve and protect our nation's liberties have many things to worry about. Keeping a military family together is not an easy task with hardships such as school transfers, separation from family members and worrying about whether or not the family would be properly provided for. For approximately one-hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year, the State of Connecticut can provide protection to the families of the people who provide protection for all of the citizens of the United States.

I hope you will consider this bill and demonstrate to the troops from Connecticut that they are supported and appreciated here at home. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.